

I am a licensed amateur radio operator, a Volunteer Examiner, and an ARRL Instructor. I also direct an inner-city youth center in Terre Haute Indiana. The youth center is Ryves Hall Youth Center and is a part Of Catholic Charities of Terre Haute. In 2003 we worked with 1917 different children and their families. All of our programs are totally free of charge for all children walking through our doors. Within the past year we have organized an amateur radio club (KC9EKW). Our club uses a Kenwood ts-2000 and has recieved grants to support our endeavors. Our children are extremely interested in amateur radio. More so, they are interested in working DX and using the HF bands. Currently our license system does not allow entry level licensees the opportunity to use these bands. For amateur radio to continue to grow we need to rectify this issue. In the past year we have had approximately 13 individuals licensed, mostly youth under 18 years of age. We currently have a waiting list for our ham classes and college students that volunteer at the youth center have also shown interest in the hobby. Unfortunately once a person is licensed they are extremely handicapped as to exploring different aspects of our hobby. I do believe that Morse code is an important part of amateur radio. In fact we have more children interested in learning Morse code than we have interested in becoming licensed. I personally believe that Morse code should always have a place in our hobby and that those who are licensed with the highest license should be required to show competency with code. Unfortunately those that are currently licensed as entry level Technicians have very little opportunity to explore using Morse code. Code is primarily used on HF bands where Technicians are not allowed to operate. I believe that if we give our "no Code" brothers, and sisters, the opportunity to use the HF bands they will be more interested in learning how to communicate using Morse code. I therefore fully endorse the proposal set fort by the ARRL. I believe that this will be the easiest and quickest way to remedy the problems that I have observed. Thank you for your consideration.